

'Putin's Chef' Wins \$190K Catering Contract for Coronavirus Patients

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Prigozhin is under U.S. sanctions. **Vladimir Smirnov / TASS**

Yevgeny Prigozhin, a catering magnate with close ties to President Vladimir Putin, has won a \$190,000 contract to provide hospital food for Moscow's coronavirus patients, according to information [posted](#) on the government's online public procurement portal.

The government portal says that AVK, a company owned by Prigozhin, will supply ready-made meals to the city hospital at Kommunarka, where coronavirus patients and those suspected of having the virus are being treated.

The 15-million-ruble contract was awarded to AVK without a competitive bidding process, the Open Media news website [reported](#) Wednesday. The procurement document justifies this move by citing "an accident or other natural or manmade emergencies" when "other methods for choosing a supplier which take time are impractical."

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A patient being treated at Kommunarka with suspected coronavirus confirmed to Open Media that his hospital meals were made by AVK.

Russian media have previously [reported](#) on the links between AVK and Prigozhin, the secretive businessman who has been dubbed “Putin’s chef.”

Prigozhin is under U.S. sanctions over his ties to the Internet Research Agency, the Kremlin-backed “troll factory” accused of interfering in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. He is also linked to the Wagner Group of private mercenaries which has reportedly been deployed to conflicts in Syria, Libya, Sudan and several sub-Saharan African countries.

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